



# CIVIL RIGHTS ON DECK



## IDENTIFYING THE TRAITS OF A LEADER: DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.'S LEGACY OF LEADERSHIP

By Patrick Ferraris, Communications Specialist CRD, USCG HQ

Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. is considered one of the most influential leaders of our time. He is widely recognized for his transformational leadership style, which he used to build relationships and to fight for equality and justice for all Americans. Dr. King's leadership was the topic of celebration during Coast Guard Headquarters' Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day observance event on January 12. Major General (U.S. Army Ret.) William J. Walker served as the keynote speaker for the event, reflecting on Dr. King's essential leadership traits and detailing how we should strive to develop and model our leadership abilities and journeys after King's. Walker cited endurance, courage, trustworthiness, persistence, unconditional love, and integrity as key leadership traits that Dr. King displayed throughout his life. When covering integrity, Walker explained, "Integrity is a central value in a leader's character, and it is through integrity that Dr. King exercised his vision." Dr. King's vision was that of peace, justice, and equality for all individuals, as well as for a "beloved community" in which citizens are connected through mutual understanding, human dignity, love, and service to others. Adm. Linda Fagan, Commandant, U.S. Coast Guard, was in attendance and discussed the theme of service with the workforce. "When I think about Dr. King's dream, I think about the opportunity to serve," she stated. "Service is essential to the dream. I urge each of you to get involved. Act. Participate. It's a day on, not a day off. I ask you to reflect on what that may mean for you in your lives and how you might contribute towards continuing to bring the nation forward in ways that are responsive and reflective of Dr. King's dream and journey." Pictured left to right: Rear Adm. John Vann, MLK Day Executive Champion, YN2 James Lesko, Maj. Gen. (U.S. Army Retired) William J. Walker, Dr. Terri Dickerson, Civil Rights Director, Adm. Steven Poulin, Vice Commandant, USCG, LTJG Maeve Roach, and CPO Christopher Shore, MLK Day project officers, gather for a photo.



## CIVIL RIGHTS DIRECTORATE KICKS OFF ANTI-RETALIATION CAMPAIGN: UNDERSTANDING RETALIATION

By Carolyn Hunter, EEO Zone Manager, CRD, Region 1

### COAST GUARD ANTI-RETALIATION

STOP RETALIATION BEFORE IT STARTS

LEARN MORE



The Civil Rights Directorate is sponsoring an Anti-Retaliation Campaign from January 17 to March 1 that will educate and inform the Coast Guard workforce about workplace retaliation. Also known as reprisal, retaliation occurs when an employee receives negative treatment or disciplinary consequences from managers, supervisors, or even other coworkers because they participated in the Equal Employment Opportunity/ Equal Opportunity (EEO/EO) complaint process. Every member of the Coast Guard's military and civilian workforce and all applicants for employment have the right to engage in this process which includes reporting workplace discrimination or harassment, filing an official discrimination complaint, or participating in an investigation of harassment. Retaliating against employees who speak up about discriminatory practices or engage in the EEO/EO process is illegal. Since FY20, the Coast Guard averaged: 70 claims based on retaliation per year in EEO/EO Complaints and 18 incidents based on retaliation per year in Anti-Harassment/Hate Incident Cases. Behavior that can be perceived as retaliatory might include: 1) Refusal to communicate with an employee after the employee filed an EEO/EO complaint, 2) Isolation or threat toward an employee, 3) Assignment of more unfavorable tasks or duties than normal, and 4) Taking adverse personnel actions against an employee

for filing an EEO/EO complaint, including: termination, demotion or lack of promotion, discipline, or poor performance reviews. Retaliatory actions degrade performance and mission execution and are incompatible with the Coast Guard's Core Values. It can be hard for employees to exert their rights in the first place, so if they see coworkers being punished for doing so, it can deter others from engaging in activities that the laws are designed to protect. Read the full "[Understanding Retaliation](#)" on MyCG. You can also find several anti-retaliation resources, training opportunities, and more news on the [Anti-Retaliation website](#). For additional information on retaliation and the Coast Guard Discrimination Complaint Process, contact your local [Civil Rights Service Provider](#).

## PARTNERSHIP IN EDUCATION PROGRAM DELIVERS HOLIDAY SPIRIT TO STUDENTS THROUGHOUT U.S.

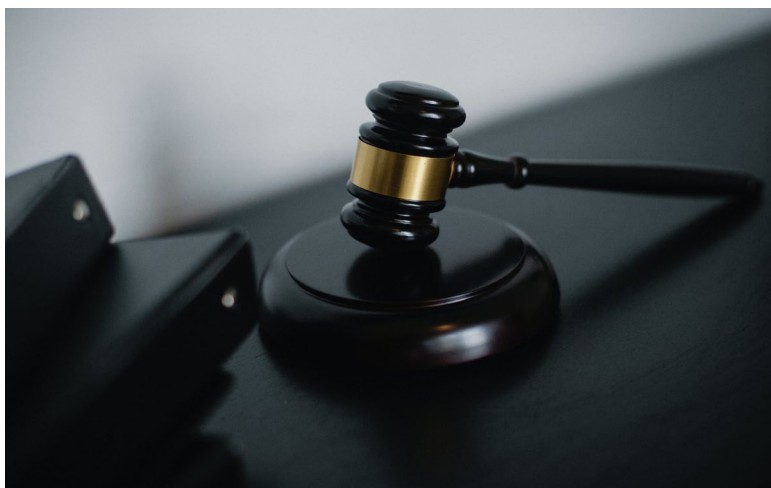
By Eddie Stoker, Partnership in Education Program Manager, Special Emphasis, & Awards Programs, CRD, USCG HQ

In schools across the country where the United States Coast Guard (USCG) lives and works, USCG crewmates are not only helping teachers to further education among classmates, but also helped Santa to further holiday joy. Through the Partnership in Education (PIE) Program, USCG units partner with schools to promote the educational achievement of youth through tutoring, mentoring, and promoting careers in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM). Going above and beyond to support students in partner schools, several USCG units donated coats and gifts to children in grades K-6. A hearty shout out to PIE Coordinators at Base National Capitol Region, Sector San Diego, Sector Virginia, and others for helping spread holiday joy. If you're interested in helping your unit engage with local schools through the PIE program, please email [Edward.A.Stoker@uscg.mil](mailto:Edward.A.Stoker@uscg.mil). Pictured: Left: Sector San Diego PIE volunteers hosted a Santa Picture Day for students at Fay Elementary School. Center: Gifts collected by PIE volunteers from Sector Virginia that would later be given to 77 local little ones through a gift drive. Right: Department of Homeland Security Deputy Secretary John Tien joined Coast Guard Headquarters PIE volunteers in delivering gift bags, coats, and winter supplies for students of Turner Elementary School in Washington D.C.'s Ward 8.



Nominations are now open for the 2023 Federal Asian Pacific American Council (FAPAC) Uniformed Services and Civilian Awards. Coast Guard service members (active and reserve) and civilian employees are encouraged to nominate deserving individuals who have made significant contributions to the advancement and promotion of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) in the workforce. The deadline for submissions is February 7th. [Nominate someone today!](#)

## SUPERVISOR THREATENS TERMINATION IF ACCUSATIONS ARE UNTRUE: A CASE OF RETALIATION



By Elizabeth Mercado-Prioleau, Equal Opportunity Specialist, CRD, USCG HQ

In a recent case, a Department of Homeland Security employee alleged that the Agency discriminated against him based on his National Origin and retaliation. The Complainant contended that his supervisor denied his request to work additional hours, denied him training opportunities, made fun of his accent, and requested that he work on his English. After these events, the Complainant met with the Assistant Director to explain his concerns. During the meeting, the Assistant Director responded by warning the Complainant that if any of his statements were untrue, it would lead to termination of his employment. According to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), such statements can discourage a “reasonable person” from reporting potential discrimination for fear that an unsuccessful complaint could result in disciplinary

action. The Agency emphasized that they did not retaliate because the Complainant had “levied serious allegations against management,” and the Assistant Director informed Complainant that under Agency policy, “false, defamatory, and disparaging statements” could result in discipline. However, the EEOC determined that the Assistant Director’s warning about making false accusations and risking disciplinary action was retaliatory. The EEOC stated that the truth or falsity of a Complainant’s allegations goes to the facts of the complaint and is irrelevant as to whether they can bring a claim of discrimination. The EEOC concluded that the Agency subjected the Complainant to unlawful retaliation as alleged. For more information on the Equal Employment Opportunity process, please contact your local [Civil Rights Service Provider \(CRSP\)](#). [Shelby R. v. Dep’t of Homeland Security, EEOC Appeal No. 2020005406 \(Mar 28, 2022\)](#)





## Civil Rights Directorate

**Dr. Terri Dickerson**

Director

**CDR Andrew Grantham**

Executive Assistant

**Mr. James Ellison**

Assistant Director

**Mr. Luby Harvey**

Assistant Director, Planning & Resources

**Ms. Tabettha McFeders**

Division Chief

**Mr. Eduardo Zayas**

Division Chief

**Mr. Patrick Ferraris**

Communications Specialist

## Contact Information

2703 Martin Luther King Jr.  
Ave., S.E.  
Washington, DC 20593-7000  
Phone: (202) 372-4500  
Fax: (202) 372-8303

Visit us at:

[https://www.uscg.mil/  
resources/civil-rights/](https://www.uscg.mil/resources/civil-rights/)

Subscribe to

["Civil Rights on Deck"](#)

## COAST GUARD ENGAGES YOUTH IN MARINE ENVIRONMENT THROUGH ART

By Eddie Stoker, Partnership in Education Program Manager, Special Emphasis, & Awards Programs, CRD, USCG HQ



One of the ways the Coast Guard helps to promote protecting marine environments is through the arts. Annually, the Coast Guard co-sponsors a K-12 Student Art Contest with the North American Marine Environmental Protection Association (NAMEPA), and the Inter-American Committee on Ports of the Organization of the American States (CIP-OAS). This year, students are encouraged to submit an original poster that depicts "Preventing Marine Pollution." The contest is open to all students in grades K-12 across the Americas (North, Central, South America, and the Caribbean). Students living outside of these locations can participate if they have one or more parent on active duty in the Coast Guard. The submission period is now open and NAMEPA is accepting artwork until April 1, 2023. [Read more about the contest](#) and visit the [NAMEPA website](#) for contest rules and details on how to enter.

## CIVIL RIGHTS WELCOMES NEW EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY SPECIALIST

By Yvonne Nunn, EEO Zone Manager, CRD, Region 3

The U. S. Coast Guard Civil Rights Directorate welcomes aboard Mrs. Terina Obina-Pahia, the new Equal Employment Opportunity Specialist for Region 3, Zone 11. Mrs. Terina Obina-Pahia served in the Coast Guard as a Yeoman before her retirement. After separating from active duty, Mrs. Obina-Pahia worked as a Paralegal Specialist and became the owner of her own transport company. Mrs. Obina-Pahia originally hails from Oahu, Hawaii. She enjoys woodworking, construction projects and spending time with family.



## REFLECT ON THE MOVEMENT FOR JUSTICE AND EQUALITY

In February, the Coast Guard and the Nation recognize Black History Month. This observance acknowledges and celebrates the contributions of Black Americans to the United States. The Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) recommends a yearly theme for Black History Month. This year, the theme is "Black Resistance" which provides an opportunity to reflect on the movement for justice and equality by Black communities. Specifically, ASALH states the theme represents the resistance of "historic and ongoing oppression, in all forms, especially the racial terrorism of lynching, racial pogroms, and police killings." All Coast Guard Commands and units are encouraged to commemorate Black History Month through in-person gatherings and through remote collaboration platforms, websites, newsletters, and social media.

